

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1340

INFO USIA WASHDC

DOD WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

NAVELEXSYSCOM FOR PME-119

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

CINCPACREP CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 4026

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, AS,US

SUBJ: PROJECT OMEGA: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF OMEGA SYSTEM CONTROL

REF: CANBERRA 3974 , PARAGRAPH 8

1. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CURRENT PLANS CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL CONTROL OF OMEGA SYSTEM WERE HIGHLIGHTED BY TELEPHONE CALL JULY 19 FROM GERRY UNKLES, FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY, DEPT. OF TRANSPORT. UNKLES TOLD EMBOFF THAT MINISTER JONES AND OTHERS IN GOA ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HAVING TO RESPOND IN JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE HEARINGS TO QUESTION ABOUT CONTROL OF OMEGA SYSTEM. UNKLES SAID THAT QUESTION ALONG THESE LINES WOULD BE ASKED OF DEPT. OF STATE THROUGH AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY WASHINGTON WITHIN NEAR FUTURE. ACCORDING TO CURRENT INFORMATION, JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE IS SCHEDULED TO HAVE FIRST ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING AUGUST 3, ALTHOUGH GOA MAY WELL WANT RESPONSE ON THIS QUESTION ASAP IN ORDER TO PREPARE AN INTERNALLY COORDINATED PROPOSED RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE.

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2. UNKLES INDICATED IT WAS HIS IMPRESSION THAT USG PLANS FOR INTERNATIONAL CONTROL ORGANIZATION TO BE BASED IN HONLULU WERE NO LONGER VALID. HE SAID THIS RAISED QUESTION OF USEFULNESS OF SYSTEM TO AUSTRALIA, FOR EXAMPLE, IF IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR OTHER COUNTRIES TO CLOSE DOWN OMEGA TRANSMISSION IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY OR INTERNATIONAL CIRISIS. HE CITED OBLIQUELY IN THIS CONNECTION FRENCH STATION AT LAREUNION AND JAPANESE STATION ON TSUSHIMA AS STATIONS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO AUSTRALIA. AUSTRALIANS OBVIOUSLY BELIEVE SOME KIND OF INTERNATIONAL ASSURANCE IS ADVISABLE TO MAKE CERTAIN OMEGA SIGNALS WILL CONTINUE TO BE TRANSMITTED IN TIMES OF CRISIS. THEIR PARTICULAR PROBLEM , HOWEVER, IS TMVT THEY ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO RESPOND TO SPECIFIC COMMITTEE QUESTION WITH REGARD TO CONTROL OF OMEGA SYSTEM.

3. EMBOFF MENTIONED DURING CONVERSATION STATEMENT MADE BY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT JONES AT RECENT SURFERS'S PARADISE CONFERENCE TO EFFECT THAT AUSTRALIAN STATION COULD BE "SWITCHED OFF" IF IT APPEARED THAT IT WAS BEING USED TO DETRIMENT OF AUSTRALIAN INTERESTS. UNKLES RESPONDED THAT HIS "HAND TREMBLED" WHEN HE HEARD THIS STATEMENT TOO, BUT THAT JONES OBVIOUSLY WAS RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS IN VERY TAUT ATMOSPHERE OF INTRA-PARTY DEBATE INVOLVING NOT ONLY OMEGA BUT OTHER MATTERS AS WELL. ON OTHER HAND, JONES DID MAGNIFICENT JOB OF PROMOTING OMEGA AT CONFERENCE AND WAS EVEN SHOWN ON NATIONAL TELEVISION CLIP OF DEFENDING OMEGA.

4. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE EARLY CONSIDERATION OF CONTROL QUESTION AND APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO INQUIRIES.
GREEN

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